tutelary deity of Chilas whose worship was practised in former times.

The system of government is the same in all these small republics, and differs somewhat from what obtains among the Afghans. Each village, according to its size, has a certain number of Jushteros, or elders, who are appointed according to the general estimation in which they are held for bravery, liberality, and eloquence. They receive no benefit from their office, and are more the servants than the leaders of those they represent. Each village manages its own affairs irrespective of its neighbours, and it is in the superintendence of these details that the Jushteros are mostly occupied. All matters affecting the village are discussed in public. A meeting for this purpose is called *Sigas*. At the Sigas all who please join in the discussion, the Jushteros apparently encouraging individuals to give their advice, and when the general opinion has thus been elicited, the Jushteros announce the decision they have formed. At a Sigas of several villages, a single Jushtero is appointed by each village at a meeting previously held. At the close of the general discussion, which is open as before, a loud whistle is given, after which none but the representative Jushteros are allowed to speak. If war with a neighbouring valley is determined on, the Jushteros settle the way in which those they represent shall take part in it; but beyond their personal influence they have little voice in determining the general policy to be pursued. It is for them to decide who shall stay at home and who shall take the field, and in the innumerable disputes about land their decision is respected; but should the dispute involve men of another village, they are expected to do their best for their own townsmen. In more serious disputes the whole valley makes common cause against its neighbours; but this does not prevent all the communities combining, when threatened by an external foe. Criminal offences are not dealt with by the Jushteros, but by the Moollahs, who profess to administer the law according to the Shuryat; this is, however, set aside in many instances in favour of ancient custom, which is very strong in some communities, and the prompt redress of grievances depends greatly on the personal influence of the aggrieved. Murder is regarded as a personal matter to be avenged by the nearest relative; but should the case be of a very wanton nature, and the family of the murdered individual have sufficient influence with the community, reparation is enforced by general consent. Blood feuds are not permitted to last for an indefinite period, as

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1874 AVI Kashmir
Dard AVI

The lower part of the valley, occupied by Gilgit, is from one to three miles wide; it is bounded on each side by steep rocky mountains; the valley itself contains stony alluvial plateaux of various form, and various level above the river, which flows in cliffs more or less in them; the greater part of this space is arid and barren, but, as usual, in front of each side ravine is a cultivated space, watered by the side stream, on which is a collection of houses. The line of mountains on the south-west side of the valley is divided most regularly by these ravines; between each of them the steep rocky masses narrow as they rise. On the north-east side the mountains are of an enormous size; they are well seen from the ridge separating the Sin and Gilgit valleys; the rocky spurs lead back to lofty snowy peaks, one of which is over 25,000 feet in height. In front of each ravine on that side, too, is the wide-spread alluvial fan, with a portion of it watered and cultivated. There the mountains are completely bare, but on the south-west side, high up above the lower cliffs, is a growth of pine-wood.

The village of Gilgit is on one of the watered tracts on the right bank of the river; here the cultivated ground is not part of the fan of a side stream, but is on the flat plain of the river alluvium, which makes a terrace 30 or 40 feet above the water. The cultivation occupies the space of a square mile or so, extending from the river bank to the mountains; the irrigating water comes from the nearest side stream. The houses here, as also in Astor, are flat-topped; they are scattered over the plain in two and threes among groups of fruit-trees, having been rebuilt in this way after the destruction that occurred in the various wars to which Gilgit has been subject; it will take long for the village to recover the abundance of fruit-trees which used to prevail. The fort of Gilgit is the Maharaja's chief stronghold in Dardistán. It has been at different times taken, destroyed, rebuilt, added to, and altered. In 1870, when I was there, the appearance of it from the south-west was as represented in the sketch on the next page. The central part with the high towers (one of them loftier than the rest) was built by the ruler Gaur Rahmán during his second reign in Gilgit when the Maharaja Gulab Singh's troops had been for a

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

without its note, no warlike expedition could be expected to succeed which started without the fairy approval. But if I never heard the fairy drum, I have seen what few will ever have the chance of seeing again, the Dainyal, the diviner or soothsayer inspired by the fairies. Dainyals are usually women, but men sometimes become possessed, and the seers are seemingly of all ages. The one I saw was a buxom married village girl of about twenty, held in great estimation in the village and district on account of her supernatural powers, and ruling her household with a rod of iron.

I had ridden up the Bagrot valley, down which a stream from the southern glaciers of Rakapushi reaches the Gilgit river, in order to see what could be done to improve the water channels, which were carried along very difficult cliffs, and which the people only kept in even partial repair with the greatest labour. It was a melancholy ride. The valley had been raided years ago by the Yasin ruler, and some two-thirds of the population carried off into slavery or killed, and the traces of the tragedy were recognisable on all sides. At the mouth of the Bagrot valley lay hundreds of acres of land gone out of cultivation, the terraced fields and the raised irrigation channels still intact, their lichen-grown and sunburnt stones showing that water had not run over them for decades. Further up the valley half, and sometimes two-thirds, of the village land lay in the same state, the dead and gone vineyards easily recognisable by the small stone vats, which had once run full of foaming must; the flat stones above them, on which the grapes had been trodden out, and the little stone runnels, through which the juice had poured, were still in their places.